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President: Mr. Essy . . . . . (Côte d'Ivoire)

The meeting was called to order at 10.25 a.m.

Address by Mr. David Kpomakpor, Chairman of the Council of State of the Liberian National Transitional Government of the Republic of Liberia

The President *(interpretation from French)*: The Assembly will first hear an address by the Chairman of the Council of State of the Liberian National Transitional Government of the Republic of Liberia.

Mr. David Kpomakpor, Chairman of the Council of State of the Liberian National Transitional Government of the Republic of Liberia, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The President *(interpretation from French)*: On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the Chairman of the Council of State of the Liberian National Transitional Government of the Republic of Liberia, His Excellency Professor David Kpomakpor, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

Chairman Kpomakpor: Mr. President, I wish to join others who have spoken before me in congratulating you on your election to guide the deliberations of the forty-ninth session of the United Nations General Assembly. As you undertake this solemn and challenging responsibility we assure you of the Liberian delegation's fullest cooperation and support.

Let me also convey our gratitude to your erudite predecessor, Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana, for the skilful manner in which he guided the deliberations of the last session.

Our able and distinguished Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, deserves special commendation for his unwavering commitment to the principles of the United Nations and his untiring efforts in the promotion of world peace, international security and human dignity. We are particularly pleased at his keen interest and involvement in the search for durable peace in Liberia.

As we approach the midpoint of the last decade in this millennium we are encouraged that our world continues to make steady progress in the transition from years of ideological confrontation to convergence on global interdependence.

A manifestation of this changing situation is the growing utilization of a consensual approach to addressing such burning issues on the international agenda as human rights, population and the environment. In this regard we welcome the outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development held at Cairo and look forward to the World Summit for Social Development, to be convened in Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1995, which will consider the core issues of alleviating and reducing poverty, expanding productive employment and enhancing social integration.

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The peaceful transition from apartheid to majority rule in South Africa has been of monumental significance to Africa. We heartily welcome the new Republic of South Africa into the fold of the world body and look forward to the positive contributions it can and will surely make to the achievement of the noble goals of the United Nations.

These positive developments in the international system are, however, often overshadowed by flashpoints of ethnic conflicts around the world. The situations in Bosnia, Rwanda and Somalia, and in my own country, Liberia, among others, appear to be intractable. The brutality and destruction unleashed by these conflicts often tend to overwhelm the international community and make peace-keeping a major preoccupation of the United Nations and, to an increasing degree, of regional organizations as well. Economic and human resources that could otherwise be applied to improving the human condition are being expended on peace-keeping activities.

Some of these intra-State conflicts are so complex that policy makers are forced to debate the pros and cons of peace-keeping or peacemaking when the main issue should be that of saving lives, especially in those situations where a legitimate governing authority is absent.

The result is that the international community sometimes reacts with what may amount to short-cut solutions. Often attempts at resolving some of these conflicts unwittingly overlook the intransigence and recalcitrance of warlords who were the ones primarily responsible for bringing untold suffering and deprivation to their own people. These conflicts also create lucrative opportunities for arms dealers and international supporters of warlords.

A disturbing phenomenon associated with these conflicts is that of the child soldier. Children are recruited, indoctrinated and trained in the art of murder, mayhem and genocide, thus depriving a country of an entire generation of its human resources. This is particularly true for my own country, Liberia, where the great majority of the 60,000 combatants are children who have yet to complete their primary education. The forced conscription of our children — the building-blocks of our future — must be stopped, since it violates the Convention of the Rights of the Child. Therefore we should not yield to any action that has the effect of sanctioning the acquisition of power through the use of force or promoting solutions aimed at appeasing warlords at the expense of the larger unarmed population.

The world has witnessed the rise, during the last four years, of a powerful movement for democracy and democratization. This movement has swept asunder some of the strongest totalitarian regimes in its wake, from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union to Latin America, Africa and Asia.

The international community must therefore demonstrate its resolve to support this movement so that the democratic aspirations of all peoples are realized throughout the world. It would be an indictment of the present world leadership for it to simply watch countries become involved in these conflicts, which may have been ignited initially by the spark of democratization.

It is against this background that we wish to briefly review the Liberian peace process.

At the outset, I should like to register the heartfelt gratitude of the Liberian people to the gallant men of ECOMOG — the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Military Observer Group — who foiled the attempted coup on 15 September 1994. Since 1990, their selfless sacrifice has provided a security blanket in parts of Liberia, thus enabling us to work towards the attainment of peace in our country.

It will be recalled that in December 1989 the Liberian situation exploded into an armed conflict, ostensibly to rid the country of military dictatorship. By mid-1990, however, the conflict had degenerated into a three-way struggle for power. The State machinery had disintegrated.

None of the armed factions engaged in the struggle appeared capable of winning a decisive victory and establishing legitimate authority. In the wake of this deadly stalemate, ECOWAS intervened with a two-pronged peace plan: A peace-monitoring force would be dispatched to Liberia to provide security for the country, while the Liberians themselves would re-establish an internal civil administration to prepare the country for democratic elections.

The ECOWAS peace-monitoring group, ECOMOG, arrived in Liberia in August 1990. An All-Liberia Conference was convened in Banjul, the Gambia, in the same month, and elected the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU). Upon the insistence of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), a second, All-Liberia Conference was convened in Monrovia in 1991, which endorsed the Interim Government.

Unfortunately, the NPFL, which insisted on the Conference as a precondition for peace, walked out during the deliberations.

Several other meetings of the warring factions were held in Banjul, Freetown, Dakar, Bamako, Lomé, Yamoussoukro and Geneva, in search of peace with the armed factions. With remarkable success, the ECOWAS peace plan, with an interim civilian administration for Liberia and with ECOMOG, restored some degree of stability and provided a semblance of law and order in the country for a period of two years.

On 15 October 1992, the NPFL launched an unprovoked attack on ECOMOG and the people of Monrovia in what was termed "Operation Octopus". The refusal of the NPFL to fully comply with the Yamoussoukro Accord gave rise to a new armed group, the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO), which claimed its sole purpose was to free the Liberian people from the NPFL.

With hostilities raging among the armed factions, the United Nations, in concert with ECOWAS and the OAU, decided to convene a peace conference of the parties to the conflict in Geneva in June 1993. The meeting was attended by the NPFL, ULIMO and IGNU. The IGNU delegation included the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL).

The United Nations Secretary-General's Special Representative chaired the meeting, which was also attended by the OAU Eminent Person, the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS and the Field Commander of ECOMOG.

The framework agreed upon in Geneva was formally concluded and signed by the parties in Cotonou, Republic of Benin, on 25 July 1993. The overriding principle of the Cotonou Agreement was to achieve disarmament and demobilization of the warring factions, which agreed that they would give up their arms in exchange for participating in the formation of a new government.

The Cotonou Agreement provided for the establishment of the Liberian National Transitional Government, headed by a five-man Executive Council of State, a 35-member Transitional Legislative Assembly and the reconstitution of the Supreme Court and the Ad Hoc Elections Commission. Each of these organs was to be composed of nominees representing the parties to the Agreement. The Cabinet positions were apportioned in consultation with the parties.

The Liberian National Transitional Government was given the mandate to extend its authority throughout the country, to repatriate and resettle refugees from abroad, and to conduct free and fair elections within six months.

Disarmament was to be carried out concomitantly with the seating of the Liberian National Transitional Government, and the armed factions agreed to cooperate with the expanded ECOMOG to disarm under the supervision of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia.

The Liberian National Transitional Government was inducted into office on 7 March 1994, and the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General gave assurances that disarmament would commence simultaneously. He also assured the Liberian people that the armed factions would comply fully with the provisions of the Cotonou Agreement. After the seating of the Liberian National Transitional Government the military aspects of the peace process did not keep pace with the political aspects as contemplated by the Agreement. Moreover, it took six months for the additional troops from Tanzania and Uganda to arrive in Liberia. The expanded ECOMOG troops were never deployed and the factions did not disarm. They continue to believe in the attainment of political power by force of arms or, more precisely, through the barrel of the gun.

Consequently, there has been a mushrooming of armed groups. There are now two factions of ULIMO and two factions of NPFL. There is also the Liberian Peace Council (LPC) and the Lofa Defence Force (LDF). Each of the breakaway factions of ULIMO and the NPFL, together with the LPC and LDF, have joined in a coalition of forces to fight the branch of NPFL led by Mr. Charles Taylor. As I speak, the battle in central Liberia rages on. A consequence of this situation is the mass exodus of frightened citizens who have had to seek refuge and havens in neighbouring countries and a heightening of the humanitarian needs of the country.

I come now to the Liberian National Conference. Realizing the current morass in the country and the uncooperative attitude of the warring factions towards the Liberian National Transitional Government, a citizens' consultative meeting was convened in Monrovia from 29 to 30 July 1994. At that meeting the people of Liberia determined that for the last four years the destiny of the country had been largely dictated by the warring factions and that they, the citizens, were being marginalized. They also concluded that the stalemate in the peace

process was the result of the intransigence of the warring factions with respect to disarmament and their failure to cooperate with the Liberian National Transitional Government, ECOMOG and UNOMIL in carrying out their respective responsibilities and duties under the Cotonou Agreement.

The people of Liberia therefore decided that they must, and would, become involved in breaking the stalemate in the peace process. They have therefore convened since 24 August 1994 the Liberian National Conference (LNC), with representatives coming from all walks of life, including the 13 political subdivisions of the country, political parties, interest groups, professional organizations, social and religious organizations, trade and labour unions, student and youth groups and women's organizations.

The Conference organizers endeavoured to involve and encourage the participation of the warring factions. The Conference was addressed by the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, Mr. Trevor Gordon-Somers; the former United States President, Jimmy Carter; and the OAU Eminent Person, the Rev. Dr. Canaan Banana. General Arnold Quainoo, ECOMOG's first field commander and Special Representative of the ECOWAS Chairman, and the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, Dr. Edouard Benjamin, also addressed the Conference and expressed support for it.

The Conference agenda included disarmament and demobilization, governance and elections. The consensus of the Conference was that the fundamental problem of the Liberian conflict is not governance, but, rather, the refusal of the armed groups to disarm and demobilize. The Conference therefore called for strong and effective sanctions to be applied against armed groups and warring factions which fail to cooperate in the disarmament process.

With respect to governance, the Conference indicated that the mandate of the Liberian National Transitional Government should be extended and the Council of State strengthened so as to take the country through to free and fair democratic elections. We also see the Liberian National Conference as the embodiment of the democratic aspirations of the Liberian people and their opposition to the acquisition of power by force. Too much time, energy and resources and too many lives have been lost by Liberians and other West Africans to settle now for a less than honourable, just and lasting solution.

I turn next to the Akosombo Agreement. The Liberian National Conference had gained momentum and was at the height of the debate on the fundamental problems of disarmament, governance and elections, when His Excellency, President Jerry Rawlings of Ghana, Chairman of ECOWAS, along with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, undertook new initiatives to resolve the impasse in the peace process. A meeting of leaders of two warring factions, Mr. Charles Taylor of the NPFL and Lieutenant-General Alhaji S.G. Kromah, of ULIMO, together with the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia, Lieutenant-General J. Hezekiah Bowen, was held at Akosombo, Ghana. The OAU Eminent Person, Dr. Canaan Banana, also attended the meeting. Except for General Bowen, the Liberian National Transitional Government delegation was excluded from the deliberations at Akosombo.

On 12 September 1994, General Bowen, Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), without authority signed the Akosombo Accord, along with the two warring leaders: Charles Taylor and Alhaji Kromah. The Agreement did not adequately address the issue of disarmament but instead called for the restructuring of the Council of State of the Liberian National Transitional Government (LNTG). The two armed factions would each nominate a representative; General Bowen — selected without consultation — would represent the AFL, the constitutional army of Liberia; the ongoing Liberia National Conference would nominate one civilian; and the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO) would consult to nominate the fifth member of the Council. The restructured LNTG would have a life-span of 16 months, with general elections slated for October 1995 and installation of the newly elected government in January 1996. The LNTG delegation registered its reservations about the Agreement with the Ghanian Government before returning to Liberia.

In Liberia, the Akosombo Accord caused an outcry and widespread indignation. It was viewed as yet another attempt to appease the armed factional leaders whose uncompromising stance has been responsible for prolonging the conflict, causing the death of so many Liberians and bringing so much destruction and suffering upon the people.

The Government of Liberia has therefore rejected the Akosombo Accord for a number of reasons. First, the Accord endeavoured to reduce the armed forces of

Liberia, the constitutional army, to a warring faction. Secondly, it failed to address adequately the political problems — disarmament and demobilization of the warring factions — that have been the single most important stumbling-block to the peace process. Thirdly, the premises underpinning the Akosombo Accord were fundamentally flawed. It ascribed power and influence to armed leaders whose standing, credibility and control within their own respective factions are questionable. There was also a failure to recognize the changing military positions of the factional leaders on the ground. For example, Mr. Charles Taylor of the NPFL has been unable to return to, or regain, his headquarters at Gbarnga since leaving the meeting in Ghana, because his forces have been driven out by rival factions. A few days after General Hezekiah Bowen returned from Ghana, there was an attempted coup and mutiny in his army ranks, and he had to seek refuge at the headquarters of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Military Observer Group (ECOMOG). General Alhaji Kromah's ULIMO remains split.

We are pleased to note that as an indication of his sincerity and commitment towards finding a just and lasting solution to the Liberian crisis, the President of Ghana and current Chairman of ECOWAS, His Excellency Jerry Rawlings, was quick to respond to the concerns raised by the Liberian people to the Akosombo Accord. Within days of its signing, he dispatched a delegation to Liberia to hold consultations on the Agreement. He has since convened a broader-based consultative meeting in Accra. Consultations on the Agreement continue in this regard.

The Liberian peace process is now at a critical stage. The reaction to the Akosombo Accord and the renewed outbreak of hostilities in central Liberia among the armed factions may lead some to conclude that Liberians are simply not ready for peace, but this is not so. We are ready for peace. We believe peace could finally be within easy reach, given the right mix of initiatives. Recent events in the country, including the failed coup attempt by dissident elements of the Armed Forces of Liberia and renewed hostilities among the warring factions, reinforce the need for effective action towards disarmament and demobilization.

I would be amiss if I did not say how grateful the people of Liberia are to the United Nations, ECOWAS, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), non-governmental organizations, relief agencies and the entire international community, who have made untold sacrifices and contributed towards the search for peace in Liberia. In this light, we wish to appeal to the world community to give greater support to the work of ECOMOG by providing additional logistics and resources to enable it effectively to execute its mandate under the Cotonou Agreement.

Haiti provides a hopeful example of what can be accomplished when the international community stays the course in helping to find a peaceful solution to intra-State conflicts. Indeed, while the same set of variables that influenced tougher United Nations action in Haiti may not obtain in Liberia, the people of Liberia are crying out to the world, especially to those countries that are better endowed and constantly hail the benefits of democracy, to take the high moral ground and lend their potent voices and wherewithal to ending the human misery and suffering in Liberia.

I am therefore confident that the United Nations, which has striven to implement the provisions of its Charter for about half a century, can still muster the courage and will to respond to the requisites of peace, democracy and development for the truly global era that is dawning as we approach the twenty-first century.

The President (interpretation from French): On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Chairman of the Council of State of the Liberian National Transitional Government of the Republic of Liberia for the statement he has just made.

Mr. David Kpomakpor, Chairman of the Council of State of the Liberian National Transitional Government of the Republic of Liberia, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

Agenda item 9

General debate *(continued)*

The President *(interpretation from French):* The first speaker is the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Togo, His Excellency Mr. Boumbera Alassounouma.

Mr. Alassounouma (Togo) *(interpretation from French):* More than anyone else, Sir, you are aware of what excellent and solid relations of cooperation, friendship and fraternity have existed for many years now between your country, Côte d'Ivoire, and Togo. It is thus with great joy and enormous pride that my country welcomes your unanimous election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session.

I therefore wish, on behalf of the Government of Togo, in the name of my delegation, and in my own capacity, to congratulate you most sincerely on this tribute to you and to your fraternal country, Côte d'Ivoire.

The Togolese delegation and I myself assure you of our support. We are convinced that your competence and your long experience in international affairs augur well for the success of our work.

I should like to take this occasion to congratulate your predecessor, His Excellency Mr. Samuel Insanally, the Permanent Representative of Guyana, who, with effectiveness and tact, guided the proceedings of the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session. We extend our congratulations as well to the Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who has dedicated himself to the noble ideals of this Organization to which we all belong. We reiterate to him the total support of the delegation of Togo.

South Africa has returned from a long voyage. We have at last seen the death of apartheid. My country is proud to have contributed to reversing that odious system. Togo has always supported the legitimate aspirations of peoples oppressed the world over, but in particular the aspirations of the black majority of South Africa, whose fundamental rights, even the most elementary among them, were long trampled.

It is therefore with great joy that my country, recognizing the courage, dedication and sacrifice of the South African nation, welcomes the return to the United Nations of that fraternal country, which is now free and committed to waging — together with all the States Members of this Organization — the necessary fight for democracy and for the total independence of other peoples.

In 1995, our Organization will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary. A new era of hope lies ahead for our nations.

Unfortunately that era of hope also contains concerns, disquiet at the increasing impoverishment of the poorest countries, concern too about a world constantly devastated by conflicts and difficulties of all types. The period of upheaval in which we live presents our Organization with a challenge — that of understanding all the major changes that are under way and of finding rapid solutions to the many problems confronting our planet.

It is therefore urgent to redefine the broad guidelines of the Organization on the basis of greater humanism on the global level, so that man can again regain the strength to better exercise his freedom, to enjoy it fully, to respect the laws of nature, and to break away from egoism and hard-heartedness. We must also lay new foundations for cooperation to help the United Nations not only to eliminate the consequences of the cold war, but also to solve the problems of today and those of tomorrow. This is the only way to respond to the expectations of our peoples and to respect the spirit of those who, 50 years ago, created our world Organization, with the purpose, among other things, of preventing conflicts for the peace of nations and the well-being of peoples. The implementation of the relevant recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General, an Agenda for Peace, should, to this end, prompt us to focus our action, urgently, on preventive measures, to establish stable foundations for the harmonious development of society and to resolve its problems by developing flexible and appropriate mechanisms within the framework of the reforms now under way.

There are clear grounds for optimism when we see that the adversaries of yesterday have become the allies of today, seeking together peaceful and mutually advantageous solutions to the international problems of the day. We therefore have all the more reason to have faith in the future of our Organization. Planning for the future rather than waiting to be overtaken by events should be the watchword of our nations.

On the internal level, my country has undertaken to embark on the path of democracy based on a complete and responsible multiparty system in order to establish a State based on law and on respect for the individual.

Following the adoption of a new constitution in September 1992, presidential and legislative elections were held in August 1993 and in February 1994 respectively, leading to the establishment on 25 May last of a Government of national union whose programme of action aims basically at building a new Togo, democratic and free, at shaping national unity, at reconciling the people with itself, at rallying this people around its nation, its values and its flag, in peace and regained harmony, and at rebuilding an economy damaged under the combined effects of a range of factors both national and international.

Of course, all of this cannot be accomplished in just a few months; it takes time to overcome resentment, to reconcile the adversaries of the past, to establish the state

of law to which all aspire, to rebuild confidence and to lay the foundations of a solid and prosperous economy.

In spite of the end of the cold war, we see disorder constantly blurring the geopolitical landscape. The situation now prevailing in Africa is hardly encouraging. The continent, marginalized, awakens only the minds of the most attentive observers, when, across mountains and valleys, they hear the cries of anguish and death. The cases of Rwanda, Angola, Liberia, Somalia and Mozambique suffice to illustrate this bitter fact.

Mr. Seniloli (Fiji), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The defeat of the system of apartheid in South Africa and the tragic events in Rwanda illustrate the two extremes in the evolution of the African continent, characterized by the contrast between hope and despair, progress and destruction. While, at the present time, South Africa seems to represent hope, Rwanda, on the contrary, symbolizes the face of an Africa mutilated and ravaged.

Togo appeals to the Government of Angola and to UNITA to show goodwill and the flexibility that is necessary if a speedy and comprehensive settlement of the question is to be achieved in the framework of the Lusaka talks.

In Liberia, despite a number of agreements, the disarmament of the factions has not yet occurred, and the general elections that it was hoped would take place seem to be becoming a mirage. Let us hope that good faith will find its way into the hearts of the parties concerned so that this fraternal country may regain the advantages of reconciliation and find again the path of development.

As for Somalia, Togo appeals to the international community not to grow weary and leave that country. We therefore invite the parties to the conflict to refrain from contributing to discouragement and to resume real dialogue aimed at the rapid establishment of reliable national institutions.

In respect of Western Sahara, my delegation supports the Secretary-General's report on the question and urges all the parties to cooperate fully with the United Nations to ensure that the referendum on self-determination, to be held in February 1995 for the purpose of deciding the future of the territory and its people, is organized effectively.

The Togolese Government is gratified at the recent positive development in the socio-political situation in Burundi and invites the new leaders to do all in their power to secure the definitive restoration of peace in that country.

Togo supports unreservedly the efforts of the Secretary-General and of the Security Council to bring peace to Mozambique. It invites the parties to commit themselves totally to accepting and respecting the results of the forthcoming general elections.

Faced with this situation of armed conflict, tension and insecurity, Africa must shoulder its responsibilities. It is through its own efforts that the African continent will be able to overcome the difficulties it faces today. This is the sense of the proposal that General Gnassinmgbé Eyadema, President of the Republic of Togo, made to the Tunis Summit of the Organization of African Unity in June 1994, when he advocated the creation of an African peace force whose mission would be to ensure peace where it is threatened by acting as a buffer between the belligerents and making possible a negotiated solution to conflicts. The delegation of Togo is delighted that this idea aroused a great deal of interest on the part of certain large Powers that are prepared to provide logistical support for such a buffer force.

The unprecedented positive development of the peace process in the Middle East, reflected over the past 12 months in the Israeli-Palestinian accord of September 1993 and in the historic Washington D.C. meeting of 25 July 1994 between His Majesty King Hussein of the Hashimite Kingdom of Jordan and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel, opens up before us a horizon of hope. These encouraging developments are important steps in the direction of peace. They demonstrate clearly that disputes can be settled effectively only through peaceful means and that only resolute political will can help to build a peaceful society.

In total agreement with the initiators of and the protagonists at these gatherings, my country asks the United Nations, all Governments of the region and especially the Israeli and Palestinian leaders to continue the negotiations with a view to the establishment of a global, definitive and lasting peace in that part of the world to enable all States concerned with the Arab-Israeli conflict to live henceforth within secure borders recognized by all, on the basis of mutual respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States.

As regards the future of the Palestinian people, the transition period, which is just beginning, must be sustained, not only politically but also, and above all, through financial, economic and technical assistance from the international community. The United Nations will therefore have to assume its responsibilities fully until the Palestinian question is definitively and satisfactorily resolved in all its aspects.

In the eastern part of Europe the situation is still constantly characterized by violence and by an explosion of nationalism. States have been dislocated, borders have been called into question, and dreams of annexation and of "ethnic cleansing" inspire and haunt both minds and hearts.

Drawing lessons, as is imperative, from all these tragedies and conflicts, the United Nations must promote and encourage further the use by States of the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes. Of course, the Organization has in recent years clearly demonstrated its usefulness, especially in the fields of humanitarian affairs and the maintenance of peace. But sometimes lack of will to act promptly paralyses its action. This paralysis reveals profound shortcomings in the system of collective security provided for in the Charter and is due, above all, to the refusal of many Member States to commit themselves to peace, despite the special responsibilities entrusted to them by the Charter.

This being the case, it is clear that, as it makes decisions about the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council should be broadened and, thereby, adapted to the changes in the world of today. Togo believes that the United Nations is the most appropriate forum for the creation of a new international order and the maintenance of international peace and security, as well as for the peaceful settlement of disputes. That is why we support its actions. We demonstrated this, *inter alia*, in the framework of peace-keeping operations by sending military contingents and police officers to Rwanda, Western Sahara and Mozambique to serve under the flag of the United Nations.

Profoundly committed to peace and to the principle of general and complete disarmament, Togo rejoices in the many positive developments that have taken place in this field over recent months But we remain concerned at the constantly increasing proliferation of conventional weapons. The massive international transfers of such weapons dangerously compromise the success of effective general disarmament. It has become urgent to strengthen the role and the capacity for action of the United Nations regional centres for peace and disarmament, which are at present poorly structured and lack both the material and the human resources they need to function properly and produce the results the international community expects of them.

The particularly alarming case of the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa, of which my country is honoured to be the headquarters, is quite illustrative, and should be examined with care. For, paradoxically, while the African continent is prey to violent and constant civil wars, which endanger regional and international peace and security, the Centre, which the United Nations could well have used to contribute to the quest for appropriate solutions to these conflicts, is, either by design or by circumstance, left out and its existence is almost ignored.

As regards the nuclear problem on the Korean peninsula, my delegation welcomes the agreement recently reached between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the United States of America. It also welcomes the readiness expressed by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply with the provisions of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Togo views this courageous position adopted by the North Korean party as edifying testimony of its determination to maintain peace in the region.

The world economy continues to be characterized by trends toward stagnation and the growing disparity between North and South.

As we prepare to enter the third millennium, the elimination of poverty should be one of the main objectives of our Organization. In this context, the World Summit for Social Development, which the Government of Denmark has offered to host in March 1995 in Copenhagen, assumes its full importance. Togo fervently hopes that Member States will demonstrate political will and, in a surge of collective responsibility, give this Summit the attention necessary to obtain concrete results and practical decisions whose implementation should lead to the true elimination of poverty, the creation of genuinely productive jobs and the complete integration of marginalized or excluded sectors of society.

During the last 15 years, there have been many obstacles to growth in our countries, including the decline in foreign capital, the debt crisis, and the constant decline in public development assistance, whose level is clearly

short of the target 0.7 per cent of gross national product that was set and strongly recommended by the United Nations. All of this leads to widespread poverty, aggravated by structural adjustment programmes that have insupportable social effects.

There has been constant regression in Africa's share of world trade. The recent Marrakesh agreements that resulted from long and difficult international negotiations in the Uruguay Round, far from meeting the expectations of the developing countries in general and of Africa in particular, are likely to lead to new imbalances in international trade which may require more than a decade to redress.

In this respect, my delegation views the Agenda for Development proposed to us by the Secretary-General as a timely initiative, offering as it does an opportunity to begin a process of constructive dialogue and political mobilization to create a true and just partnership that can engage in better consideration of development issues.

Together with the Group of 77 and China, Togo strongly supports the idea that this Agenda should build an international consensus for the global liberalization of trade, on the one hand as an effective means for international cooperation for development, and on the other to give new impetus to the efforts made over the last decade to avoid protectionist policies.

If the transition of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade into the World Trade Organization is to be smooth, there must be a mechanism that can compensate the developing countries affected by the new system. Along these lines, the implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, adopted by the General Assembly in 1991, and the implementation of the Paris Declaration and the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, adopted in 1990, should, in our opinion, be geared to an increase in the volume of official development assistance, the promotion of respect for commitments that have been undertaken for new and additional resources for international cooperation, and a greater lightening of the debt burden, or even its cancellation. It would be desirable to adopt policies that ensured an adequate flow of concessional financing to the developing countries, in particular to the least developed among them; stimulated other flows of capital, including direct investment; reversed the negative trend in financial flows, and created mechanisms and allocated resources related to development.

It can never be overemphasized that sustainable development is a prerequisite to lasting peace. The right to development must be considered, henceforth, as a fundamental human right, and thus be given priority attention by the international community. Along these lines, my Government hopes that, in addition to the results of the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo from 5 to 13 September last, the work of the World Summit for Social Development, of the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in September 1995, and of the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (HABITAT II), to be held in Istanbul from 3 to 14 June 1996, will help produce at the international level a spirit of shared responsibility and the necessary political will to mobilize the resources that are indispensable if our developing countries are to thrive.

Agenda 21 and the Rio Declaration are an important bridge on the road to sustainable development and to the protection of the Earth from the dangers facing it. That is why, two years ago, all the participants in the Conference showed such enthusiasm and sincerity. Regrettably, the results of that historic summit have still not been reflected in concrete facts. No notable progress has yet been observed in the implementation of the recommendations contained, in particular, in the Programme of Action. It is high time that States and the international community did everything in their power, at the national, regional and international levels, to put into effect the commitments to sustainable development undertaken in Rio.

The Togolese Government welcomes the entry into force of the Framework Convention on Climate Change and is particularly delighted at the conclusion of another legal instrument of global scope: the International Convention to Combat Desertification in Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa. The Convention was adopted by the intergovernmental negotiating Committee in Paris in June 1994. Togo was pleased to take part in the negotiating process and will soon take up the procedures for signature and ratification. We invite all States Members of the United Nations to do likewise in order that the Convention and related instruments may enter into force as soon as possible.

Considering the uncertain future of mankind and the numerous and formidable challenges confronting the human race, it is imperative that we become clearly aware of our moral obligations. As of this moment it is essential to identify and correct the weaknesses and failings of our Organization. The reforms under way are indispensable, but they must not become a means of conferring even greater influence than in the past on the large countries and richest Powers in the world. Our new awareness must also help define ways of establishing relations among nations in the future, and in dealing with our present-day concerns we must take into account the causes of the disparities in standards of living between North and South. There is no effect without a cause, and to deny the principle of causality amounts to deferring our problems and never solving them.

Only an attitude based on action, justice and international solidarity can spare the world a conflict that would otherwise, sooner or later, be inevitable. Thus, tackling the deep-rooted causes of today's problems means seeking together the solutions that will make it possible for men, women and children to live decently and in complete freedom, without fear of being crushed by unemployment, poverty and hunger. This would also make it possible to protect the dignity of the human person and to safeguard human security.

Tomorrow we should have a world in which all nations and all citizens refuse to listen to the voice of their own personal interests when they run counter to the common weal, a world in which nations and peoples find satisfaction not only in that which is to their own advantage but also in that which is to everyone's advantage.

At its forty-ninth session, may the General Assembly, under the leadership of its President, contribute to dispelling our concerns and to defining the ways and means of helping us blaze the way into the future. This is my delegation's most fervent hope.

The President: I now call on the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica, His Excellency the Honourable Paul Robertson.

Mr. Robertson (Jamaica): May I, on behalf of the Government and the people of Jamaica, convey warmest congratulations to Mr. Amara Essy on his election as President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. I wish to assure him of the full support and cooperation of the Jamaican delegation in the deliberations on the many important issues before the Assembly.

Let me also take this opportunity to congratulate Ambassador Insanally of Guyana on the skilful and innovative manner in which he presided over the forty-eighth session. We in the Caribbean are justifiably proud of his contributions to the Assembly's deliberations.

Last year I emphasized that the international community was at a crossroads where we were faced not only with matters of economic progress but also with an environment full of conflicts and strife. My outlook was, and still is, one of optimism, an optimism rooted in the recognition that the old political and military order has passed and that history has, for the second time in less than two generations, provided us with the opportunity to embark on a process of international consensus-building. This is an exciting and daunting task, particularly for a small island State like Jamaica, whose faith and commitment to multilateralism and the United Nations remain unwavering.

Our most pressing collective challenge is to make this Organization a more effective instrument for peace and development. The United Nations is being called upon to respond to a host of new challenges, including emergency humanitarian assistance, peace-keeping, peacemaking, development and post-conflict rebuilding. The past year has seen human misery and dislocation of fearful proportions in Haiti, on the high seas of the Caribbean, in Rwanda, in the refugee camps of Zaire and Tanzania, in Bosnia and in Afghanistan. Their underlying causes are political, social and economic. The United Nations can and should bring to these and other situations a broadly encompassing view of the indivisibility of political, economic and social processes.

The Organization and its resources and the will and vision of its Members must be mobilized to address the imperatives of social and economic development. We must seek to promote a new era of international cooperation for global human security.

The global nature of this challenge is inescapable. It has become evident that no State by itself can control the spread of environmental degradation and pollution, transnational migrations and diseases such the AIDS epidemic. Economic globalization and the accompanying liberalization of trade and financial flows, now link developed and developing economies, North and South, East and West. Global solutions and coordinated strategies must consequently form the basis of our actions.

Globalization brings new opportunities, but it also brings new dangers. Despite the general trend towards improved economic management, economic disparities are widening. Developing countries are being marginalized from the growth trends in the international economy. This is a matter of concern to Jamaica as we, like a large number of other developing countries, have placed high developmental priority on export-led growth and on attracting investment flows. Structural adjustment programmes have also been undertaken at great social cost. The contributions of the United Nations and its specialized agencies in areas such as institution-building, poverty alleviation, productivity enhancement, small enterprise development and financing, and the strengthening of human resources, continue to be vital elements in enhancing the productive potential of developing countries. This will, in turn, enable our countries to benefit more fully from and to participate more effectively in a liberal and increasingly organic global economy.

The United Nations must now work vigorously towards the implementation of an agenda for development. A meaningful agenda for development must set priorities in programmes and resources that respond to the challenges posed by the international environment for developing countries. These priorities must address all issues to which adequate multilateral solutions have yet to be found. These include the burden of debt; inadequate flows of official development assistance; the debilitating brain drain; the reverse transfer of resources to multilateral financial institutions; the social costs of structural adjustment and the non-transparent trade barriers and protectionist measures that remain in place in industrialized countries against the products of developing countries even as the general trend towards liberalization and trade in goods and services is accelerating. The agenda must strengthen the role of the United Nations in the area of international economic policy-making and coordination. It must seek to enhance the relationship of the United Nations with the Bretton Woods institutions.

This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the two Bretton Woods institutions established under the umbrella of the United Nations. I wish to emphasize that we should continue to examine the roles and policies of these institutions. We must make the changes that five decades of experience indicate are necessary so as to improve the prospects for growth and development of developing countries — change which can be carried out without undermining the health and vitality of the international economy or the fiscal integrity of these institutions. Major developed countries should re-examine their opposition to the sound proposals for change that have been put forward repeatedly by developing countries — proposals that range from increasing international liquidity to longer adjustment periods. Over the years, the International Monetary Fund has moved from the supervision of a fixed exchange rate system to assisting developing countries through financial crises, while the World Bank has made the transition from post-war reconstruction to funding development in the third world. Now is an opportune time to reassess their respective roles, given new global dynamics and changing patterns of trade and investment. The Fund and the Bank need to quickly adapt to the current global economic system if they are to remain relevant to contemporary realities.

Two important conferences were held this year which offered opportunities for international attention and action. In Barbados, the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States adopted a programme of action which now requires the support and assistance of the United Nations system and the donor community for its speedy and effective implementation. The recently concluded International Conference on Population and Development in Cairo produced a landmark document highlighting the inextricable linkage between population, sustained economic growth and sustained development. Next year in Copenhagen, the World Summit for Social Development will endeavour to adopt a global approach to the eradication of poverty, the generation of productive employment and the enhancement of social integration. We will also meet in Beijing at the Fourth World Conference on Women to continue to put in place measures which will create an enabling environment for women. Jamaica will actively participate in these important processes.

I have chosen to focus at the outset on what Jamaica sees as the development imperative and priorities of the United Nations because we are convinced that the path to development and the path to peace are one and the same. Jamaica fully supports an open, non-discriminatory trading system governed by transparent rules and with an effective mechanism for settling disputes. We therefore await the implementation of the conclusions of the Uruguay Round and the establishment of the World Trade Organization. We will work actively within the new organization to ensure the promotion of development through trade, placing special importance on those

provisions in the conclusions of the Uruguay Round which seek to ensure a regime of fairness and equity in the overall context of a programme of free trade.

The international community and its institutions are dynamic. The choice is whether we actively shape the change that inevitably comes with the passing of time and with new circumstances, or whether we merely react to events. The World Trade Organization is an example of purposeful design by the international community. Yet another — a truly historic one — is the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. As is widely known, the Convention, which establishes a regulatory mechanism for the oceans, the seas and their resources, will enter into force on 16 November of this year. The inaugural meeting of the International Seabed Authority will be held in Kingston on that date. This will be both an end and a beginning. The event will mark the end of a process that began nearly twenty years ago and the opening of a new and historic chapter in international juridical and economic relations.

The inaugural meeting will see the establishment of the International Seabed Authority. We are extremely proud that Jamaica will host this important organization, which has responsibility for regulating and exploiting the world's vastest resource base. It must be emphasized, however, that the success of the Authority will require the cooperation of all parties concerned, in order to ensure that the goal of universality is achieved. It is important that the Authority receive the necessary resources to enable it to operate effectively, in a way consistent with principles and practices applied to institutions within the United Nations system.

I wish again to pay tribute to those who have contributed to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, to its ratification and to the establishment of the International Seabed Authority.

We invite all States to join in the momentous first meeting of the Authority in Kingston from 16 to 18 November. We look forward to welcoming the Secretary-General of this Organization, His Excellency Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, who has graciously accepted the invitation of the Government of Jamaica to be at the inaugural meeting.

Since I spoke to this body last year, the Republic of South Africa has resumed its seat in the General Assembly. The installation of a majority government in that country, under the leadership of President Nelson Mandela, is a historic development of which the entire international community is justifiably proud. The dismantling of apartheid was a consequence of the long and valiant struggle waged by the South African people. It was also a victory for multilateralism and an important reminder of the critical role that multilateral organizations such as the United Nations can play in resolving difficult international issues. The Government and the people of Jamaica welcome a non-racial, democratic South Africa into the international community of nations.

In our own region, the situation in Haiti has been of great concern to Jamaica and our Caribbean Community (CARICOM) partners. The wanton abuse of human rights that led to the death of Haitians within Haiti and of many of those who fled in unsafe vessels simply had to stop.

We welcome the most recent developments in Haiti and the reaffirmation by the international community of its commitment to the Governors Island Accord. There can be no deviation from the critical elements to which we subscribed. The recent Security Council resolution sends a strong signal to the military authorities that the international community will accept no less than the prompt return of the legitimately elected President, the restoration of the constitutional authority of the Government of Haiti, the reform of the army and the police force, and the building of lasting democratic institutions. Jamaica, along with several of our CARICOM partners, is playing its part in this process by participating in the multinational force and in the United Nations Mission in Haiti.

Developments in Haiti have underscored the wisdom of the philosophy of the countries of the Caribbean that maintaining peace and stability, within the context of democratic institutions and practices, must be the fundamental basis for the development of our region. Within the wider Latin American and Caribbean region, we are actively strengthening and widening cooperation among our countries. The establishment of the Association of Caribbean States (ACS) in July of this year was a historic development that provides for even stronger collaboration and cooperation.

We hope that in the interest of the entire region, a process of sustained dialogue and accommodation between Cuba and the United States can be initiated, and that this will lead to conditions that permit the eventual full reintegration of Cuba into the region and into the hemispheric community. Jamaica welcomes the call

made by the Rio Group at its recent Eighth Summit meeting for the lifting of the trade embargo against Cuba.

The trade and economic prospects of countries in the region can be strengthened only by the priority now being accorded to regional and hemispheric relations and by the growing role, actual wand envisioned, for regional and subregional organizations, such as CARICOM and the newly established ACS, as well as by arrangements such as the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). In the case of NAFTA, which we support strongly, Jamaica and other participants in the Caribbean Basin Initiative (CBI) programme continue to press for the adoption, by the United States Congress of the Interim Trade programme, which would significantly offset adverse consequences on existing conditions of access under the CBI.

I feel compelled to return in these final comments to the mission of this Organization — peace and development. There can be little cause for comfort when, since 1945, 20 million people have died in wars and other conflicts. It is disturbing and instructive to learn that some 80 million persons now live in foreign lands, and that a million persons immigrate permanently each year, while another million seek political asylum as they flee both poverty and internal strife. The increasing flows of refugees and displaced persons worldwide threaten peace and stability and exacerbate tensions and conflicts between countries and in entire regions. We must strengthen international cooperation in this area and streamline national and international procedures for dealing with this grave problem.

To be true to its mission, the United Nations must be an Organization that reduces both want and war. This is why I underscored earlier my delegation's strong belief that this Organization must become increasingly active in the promotion of long-term development, which is the necessary underpinning of a genuine and lasting peace. The United Nations must not shrink from this aspect of its mission.

The military and ideological realignment of recent years has created new opportunities for peace. But these unprecedented developments must be supported by institutional reforms and by new approaches on our part. These institutional reforms must inevitably include the reform of the Security Council, the principal organ charged with the maintenance of international peace and security. In this regard, Jamaica fully supports the call for its enlargement. We believe that the Security Council must be truly representative in order to be fully effective.

Expenditure on armaments continues to consume resources and to divert spending away from human development needs in both developed and developing countries. Military downsizing, particularly by developing countries, has yet to gather the momentum that was expected at the end of the cold war. The United Nations has a legitimate role to play in providing technical and other assistance to help developing and other countries shift human and material resources from military to civilian use. We note that the permanent members of the Security Council are also the world's leading exporters of conventional weapons. This is an issue that should be addressed both in terms of reducing arms exports, as well as in terms of converting the resources to the requirements of peace and development.

It would be remiss of me if I concluded my contribution to this debate without referring to the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, to be celebrated next year. As we all prepare for this historic occasion, we must reflect on the fact that this achievement is in itself a vindication of the principles on which the Organization was founded. If we are to survive beyond that milestone we must remain steadfast to these principles.

The President: I now call on the Secretary of State for Foreign and Political Affairs of the Republic of San Marino, His Excellency Mr. Gabriele Gatti.

Mr. Gatti (San Marino) *(spoke in Italian; English text furnished by the delegation):* I wonder how historians will judge the last decade of this century, and what future generations will read about these years. My opinion is that we are experiencing an exciting period of arduous challenges and great expectations for peace.

The installation of the administration of the Palestinian National Authority in Jericho gave us strong hope for a peaceful future.

The excessive crises and wars that have recently and suddenly broken out and the revival and intensification of old ones in too many parts of our planet call for the involvement and intervention of the international community. Let me also stress that not only should such intervention be firm, but it should also be legitimate and correct. In the effort to restore peace, the international community should act fairly, respecting the legitimate reasons and opposing the illegitimate ones, with all due regard for man and human dignity.

From the top of our Mount Titano, on a clear day, one can see the coast of the former Yugoslavia. In the fourth century, San Marino's founder fled from that coast to escape religious persecution.

Now, in this forum, on behalf of the people of San Marino, I launch an appeal for peace for those tormented regions, for Sarajevo, and for the recognition of the equal rights of all human beings, without distinction of any kind, as well as for the dignity of those deprived of their right to life.

The public response to the important Conference on Population and Development, which brought representatives of many countries to Cairo in an effort to solve some of the problems hindering the fair and balanced development of all peoples, has now faded away. The decisions taken during that Conference, whose aims have been distorted and misinterpreted, are only a small step forward. However, it is encouraging to see how it has been generally recognized that our common concerns cannot and must not lie only in a necessary reduction of rapid population growth. All the problems related to this issue must be addressed, thus ensuring all people's rights to existence, to good health and free development, and the disposal of their resources as they see fit.

The Republic of San Marino participated in the Conference, which was held in Egypt, prompted by the conviction that it was its duty to offer a contribution. My fellow citizens are well aware that a small country like ours will never be in a position to play a substantial role in the choices to be made and the decisions to be taken. Nevertheless, our foreign policy is clear, and reflects our deep-rooted historical traditions.

Mr. Vilchez Asher (Nicaragua), Vice-President, took the Chair.

In line with the policy adopted, we feel compelled to call for respect for human rights and dignity. The latter implies the right to make free choices, the right to development, to democratic progress, equality, equal opportunities, and the right to live in peace.

It seems that the United Nations has given to the Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing conferences the task of outlining a feasible solution to all the problems related to social development and the status of women.

It is clear that in declaring 1994 the International Year of the Family the General Assembly made a precise and well-considered choice. By this decision the Assembly's aim was to celebrate an essential part of society, in the conviction that the family, the smallest democracy at the centre of society, is the first and most important element of any country's structure and deserves special attention by all States. In a national and international context characterized by a disquieting crisis of values, by increasing economic and social difficulties and by a growing lack of models for young people, the family, with its various historical, cultural and religious components, represents the last hope for mankind.

Against this background, all Governments have the primary task of formulating policies capable of helping and supporting the family and its components while respecting its autonomy and specific features. The Republic of San Marino considers all family issues to be of the utmost importance, and it has recently taken new measures for the protection of motherhood and fatherhood, in addition to the laws already in force. The widespread development we all hope to achieve has its roots in the family, in respect for it and within it, and means in practice gender equality and equal dignity between men and women.

On the other hand, development and its equitable distribution can be obtained only if our projects include the safeguarding of the environment. It is a notorious fact that too often protection of the natural environment is sacrificed for economic and national reasons that damage the interests of other people and the common well-being. The richest and most industrialized countries are regularly destroying the natural environment inside and outside their borders.

Therefore, we deemed it necessary and fair to include the environment, along with peace, economic growth, social justice and democracy, as items on the Agenda for Development — the project proposed by the Secretary-General for the solution of the problems that will face our planet within the next century.

In my country especially, where the protection of the territory is of basic importance because of its small size, public opinion in general and young people in particular are extremely sensitive to environmental issues and ask that choices be made that respect the interests of the community and the individual in a spirit of true solidarity. In San Marino we have created the Foundation for the Environment, with very ambitious programmes, and we hope in the future to have the cooperation and support of the United Nations.

We all share the opinion that economic development goes hand in hand with social development. Therefore, it is high time for all States to adopt appropriate social policies and develop structures in support of the poorest and weakest groups of the population. Unfortunately, unemployment, poverty, the absence of economic security for the elderly, and exploitation of labour are still a very sad, indeed tragic, reality.

My appeal to the world for solidarity is not just rhetorical. Solidarity is not only spiritual sharing but also, and above all, the substantial support offered by the rich countries to the poor ones, the solidarity of the upper classes with the lower classes, and even distribution of welfare, equal rights and opportunities. Solidarity not only means substantial aid but also implies tolerance, a noble feeling but one that is hard to achieve.

We are still witnessing with amazement shameful anti-Semitic, xenophobic and racist attitudes, showing that a culture of tolerance, dialogue and respect has still to be developed at all levels. The concept seems to me to be very simple: all men are equal and no one can claim to be superior. However, respect for others seems to be difficult to achieve, since it cannot be imposed by law or by a Government decision. This ambitious goal can be attained only through an educational process even if a long-lasting one — that involves future generations and calls upon national and supranational institutions to carry out their own responsibilities.

The United Nations is surely in a position to meet these challenges and to offer the right and appropriate solutions to the States. The role played by the United Nations as it approaches its fiftieth anniversary — an event we are about to celebrate — confirms all that.

International peace and security, the solution of many domestic crises, the settlement of disputes, the beginning of social and economic development, respect for human rights, humanitarian help, decolonization and other legal rules in international relations are all fields in which the United Nations is working. However, continuous attention to all the achievements of the United Nations is needed.

The Organization, by adapting its structure to new circumstances and needs, will be able to offer a stronger commitment and to be the authoritative and dynamic guide the world needs for the future.

Furthermore, San Marino gives particular importance to a reform of the Security Council that will lead to an equitable distribution of its seats and to a greater transparency in its work. The proper functioning of the Security Council, its close and coordinated relationship with the General Assembly, and the widest possible representation are the best guarantees that the United Nations will be able to carry out its tasks.

In this context I believe it is appropriate to remember that small States, willing and capable of making a contribution, must enjoy equal rights and dignity, since both the big Powers and the various small communities are interested in the peaceful future of the world, in the establishment of democracy and in the strengthening of freedom.

More than 50 years ago, in June 1944, the world conflict brought death and ruin even to the neutral mountain of San Marino, which had no part in the conflict and where thousands of poor refugees, deprived of everything except their lives, had sought shelter. The appeal for peace launched almost 50 years ago by the signatories of the San Francisco Charter is still dramatically up to date. Some might think that a peaceful world is a mere Utopia, and they might be right. But I am firmly convinced that everyone must contribute to the achievement of this wonderful Utopia.

The President *(interpretation from Spanish):* I now call on the Deputy Prime Minister of Iraq, Mr. Tariq Aziz.

Mr. Aziz (Iraq) *(interpretation from Arabic):* I should like to convey to Mr. Essy of Côte d'Ivoire our sincere congratulations on his election to the presidency of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. I am certain that his experience will be a positive factor in ensuring the success of the session's deliberations.

Iraq is one of the founding Members of the United Nations. Over the past five decades it has taken an active part in all the Organization's activities, has cooperated effectively with its various organs and has contributed generously when it was able to do so. Iraq has also adhered to the decisions of the Organization in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Charter.

At the international level, Iraq has participated actively and responsibly in the Movement of Non-aligned Countries, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the League of Arab States. During the 1970s it provided assistance and soft loans amounting to about $10 billion to developing countries in Africa, Asia and Latin

and Central America. Iraq has called for justice in political and economic relations and has affirmed the need to respect international law. These positions of Iraq are known to all.

What now concerns my country is the nature of the current stage of the relationship between Iraq and the Security Council, which is based on the Council's resolution 687 (1991), adopted in April of that year. That resolution, which imposed a number of obligations on Iraq, has no precedent among United Nations resolutions throughout the history of the Organization. This is how it is seen today in international circles, both legal and political. However, despite its cruel and extraordinary nature, Iraq informed the Security Council that it was ready to comply with it within the requirements laid down by the Charter's provisions regarding resolutions adopted under Chapter VII.

Since that date, despite the harsh conditions obtaining in our country as a result of the total war waged by the most powerful States of the world — a war in which more than 100,000 tons of explosives were dumped on civilian utilities throughout the country — and despite the effects of the comprehensive and harsh embargo, Iraq has striven to implement the resolution.

In March 1992 — less than a year after the adoption of the resolution — and in November of the same year we came to the Security Council to explain the substantial and serious steps that had been taken by Iraq in the process of implementing its provisions. On both occasions, we requested that positive and fair consideration be given to what had been achieved and that steps be taken towards easing the comprehensive blockade imposed upon Iraq in accordance with the terms of the resolution and, specifically, the unbearable suffering of the 20 million people of Iraq. However, our requests were not heeded.

In the middle of 1993 Iraq's relationship with the Special Commission and with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) saw a breakthrough in the field of positive and constructive cooperation with a view to completing the implementation of part C of Security Council resolution 687 (1991) — the provisions relating to proscribed weapons, which the resolution legally ties to the lifting of the embargo on oil exports.

In the process of this cooperation — on 26 November 1993 — we presented our official letter concerning compliance with Security Council resolution 715 (1991). The letter dealt with the monitoring of weapons. This was done after we had been assured that Iraq's official acknowledgment of compliance represented the most expeditious means of securing the application of paragraph 22 of resolution 687 (1991). This clear and categorical assurance is referred to in the report issued as document S/26571 on 12 October 1993. However, what we were told would be done has not been done.

During the past 11 months we have witnessed transparent tactics to delay and obstruct. These have taken various forms. Their purpose is to delay indefinitely the lifting of the embargo. In spite of the official acknowledgment by the Special Commission and the IAEA of the relevant Iraqi authorities' continuing cooperation, as well as the notable achievements of completion of the work required by those bodies over a period of more than a year, we still confront deliberate ambiguity with regard to the Security Council's discharge its obligations under paragraph 22, which permits the export of Iraqi products and commodities, including oil.

The blockade imposed on Iraq represents the most comprehensive regime ever imposed by the Security Council in all its history. With the exception of food and medicine, it includes everything and affects all aspects of life. As a result of the freezing of Iraqi assets in foreign banks, Iraq is denied all the financial resources that would enable it to pay for the food and medicines its people need. This has rendered practically redundant the exceptions relating to food and medicines.

In addition, the Sanctions Committee, which the Security Council entrusted with the task of authorizing the importation of material to Iraq, agreed on the consensus method of making decisions. However, the reality is exactly the opposite: decisions are required to be unanimous.

It is sufficient for the objection of one member to frustrate any request for imports. It is worth noting that only three of the members of the Committee have been the source of constant objections on the vast majority of the import requests relating to the provision of humanitarian civilian needs. What has made the situation in the Sanctions Committee even worse is that it proceeds on the basis of procedures which do not recognize precedents and deals with each case individually. This has led to confusion, disorder and ambiguity in the work of the Committee in regard to what is permitted, both in relation to quantity and quality. It is not difficult to see, therefore, the harmful negative consequences of this method of work by the Committee on the flow of

humanitarian goods, which are of a limited quantity anyway.

Let me refer to some glaring examples. The Sanctions Committee refused on numerous occasions to permit the importation of shrouds, pencils, cloth of all kinds including the type used for hospital bed sheets, threads of all kinds, paper for printing school books, leather, car tires including used tires, nails; the list is long and it is well documented in the records of the Committee.

This situation makes it incumbent upon the international community to reflect upon the philosophy of the sanctions regime of within the Charter of the United Nations. Is that regime a means to an end or is it an end in itself? Further, what is the nature of that regime? Is it punitive, or is it a series of procedures designed to achieve the purposes of the Charter irrespective of the unilateral goals and whims of foreign policies of Member States? It is well known to all that the sanctions regime under the Charter is nothing but a series of procedures adopted to achieve certain results that lead in turn to the achievement of the purposes and principles of the United Nations, and that such procedures should end with the cessation of their causes. What then is the state of correct application of these procedures following all the cooperation and progress achieved in complying with the resolutions of the Security Council by Iraq? What is clear to us is that the application of sanctions and the embargo in the manner described against Iraq is a process of vengeance, a process aimed at depriving the people of Iraq, a nation of with great history, a nation which has contributed immensely to human civilization, depriving it of the simplest requirements of human life.

The reports of the relevant specialized agencies indicate the continuing deterioration of living conditions of the Iraqi citizens. The Iraqi Government makes available to every citizen a limited rations of flour, rice, tea, cooking oil, soap, baby formula and whatever other items might be available. This share is however to meet the basic nutritional needs of human beings. Of late, we have been forced to reduce this ration due to the lack of financial resources and as well as poor agricultural output resulting from the embargo. Consequently, the largest number of citizens cannot buy what they lack of these and other items because of the high prices, especially for protein items, and they are therefore suffering from malnutrition. This situation has affected the physical wellbeing of the individual citizen in Iraq.

Despite the efforts of the Government to support and develop the agricultural sector, great difficulties continue to be faced due to the embargo. For example, the lack of pesticides, insecticides, agricultural machinery and equipment, water pumps and fertilizers. We do not have the financial means to offset these shortages; and when we do have some financial resources, the Sanctions Committee promptly obstructs their importation.

The Joint Mission of the Food and Agricultural Organization and the World Food Programme, which visited Iraq in June 1993, did indicate in its Special Alert No. 237 (1993) the magnitude of the danger resulting from the blockade on the agricultural capabilities of Iraq, which caused the loss of food-security and generated persistent deprivation, chronic hunger and endemic malnutrition among the vast majority of the population. The third FAO Special Report of May 1994 dealt with the grave problems of providing food and crops in Iraq due to the shortages of agricultural requirements. The same Report noted that these problems cannot be solved by the provision of food aid and that the permanent solution to the present food crisis lies in reviving the Iraqi economy which cannot be achieved without resuming the activity of international trade. It is also indicated that the rationing system used by the Iraqi Government, though very successful, provides only about one-half of the average caloric intake which used to be available to the citizens of Iraq before the imposition of the sanctions.

In the public health sector, health services have deteriorated, after they had been amongst the relatively advanced in the world. Due to shortages of medicine and the deterioration of medical equipment, cases of death have reached 384,022 cases from August 1990 to March 1994. The cases of death among infants have also increased and now reach 126 cases per 100,000 live births whereas it had been only 32 per thousand in the period 1985 to 1990.

There are those who claim that the Government of Iraq is the party responsible for not making available food, medicine and essential civilian needs to the people because it has refused to accept Security Council resolutions 706 (1991) and 712 (1991). Such allegations are mere falsifications.

Fair and objective consideration of the full picture of the arrangements adopted in these two resolutions would lead one to the conclusion that they do represent

a political programme aimed at violating the sovereignty of Iraq, interfering in its internal affairs and dividing its people along ethnic and sectarian lines, rather than ensuring the satisfying of humanitarian needs of the people of Iraq. Through five rounds of talks with the Secretariat in Vienna and New York in 1992 and 1993 we have sought to reach acceptable modalities through sound arrangements in order to ensure the satisfaction of the humanitarian civilian needs of our people. However, despite the sustained efforts that have been made, such efforts have failed to reach an appropriate solution, a solution free of the objectives of the biased political programme through the pressures brought to bear by the United States. One of the major ironies during those talks was that the oil and banking experts who were part of the United Nations delegation did acknowledge that the arrangements adopted in the two said resolutions were not at all customary in the oil and banking fields.

Could it be deemed reasonable by anyone involved in the oil industry that the signing of an oil-export contract should require no less than 30 procedural steps? Do Members realize that the banking arrangements stipulated by the two resolutions totally ignore the existence of a developed banking sector in Iraq? Do Members realize that a simple contract for the importation of food or medicine requires no fewer than 20 bureaucratic steps in order for those goods to reach Iraq, and that even after their arrival they are subject to monitoring by hundreds of United Nations monitors from the time they leave the Iraqi border until they reach the consumer? This is the true story of resolutions 706 (1991) and 712 (1991). Those two resolutions were never intended to meet the humanitarian needs of the people of Iraq.

In the course of the Security Council's periodic reviews, which take place every 60 days and the latest of which took place on 14 September last, the United States falsely accused Iraq on various counts in order to justify its position of delaying the lifting of sanctions indefinitely. We find it useful to refer to some examples of these accusations so that the General Assembly may see the picture clearly.

The United States charges that Iraq's cooperation with the Security Council has been sporadic, selective and opportunistic. This is a baseless accusation. It is well known that Iraq agreed to comply with the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and sought persistently to implement their provisions correctly and legally. We believe that the majority of the members of the Security Council do not join the United States in its accusation.

The United States also charges that Iraq's record with respect to the implementation of its obligations in the area of proscribed weapons was a partial and grudging acquiescence to United Nations demands. The facts, however, prove otherwise. This is made clear in the reports of the Special Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency, especially those issued since July 1993. The latest of those reports, circulated in document S/1994/860, states,

> "The Special Commission and the IAEA noted with appreciation the constructive cooperation received from Iraq and the efforts made by the competent Iraqi authorities in the conduct of their tasks." *(S/1994/860, para. 6)*

Another accusation is that the Government of Iraq cut off electricity from certain areas in the northern Iraqi Governorates. Those who make this accusation ignore the fact that the comprehensive embargo imposed upon Iraq does not make sufficient financial resources available to the Government to import spare parts and equipment for ensuring the maintenance of electrical service in the country. Moreover, the accusers are the very ones who constantly object in the sanctions Committee to Iraqi requests for importing material with which to maintain the electricity grid, in the event we have some resources available to that end.

The United States also accuses the Government of Iraq of draining the marshes in the southern part of the country in pursuit of a political programme aimed against the population of the area. According to the allegation, this action destroys their cultural heritage and causes harm to the environment. I say that this accusation, like the others, is baseless. It is utterly at odds with the sense of objectivity expected of a permanent member of the Security Council.

The truth is that the Government of Iraq carried out extensive irrigation projects in the southern part of the country, including the area of the marshes, in order to reduce salinity in the water and soil, which is a problem in central and southern Iraq, thereby increasing the amount of arable land. The planning for these projects goes back to the days of the Rehabilitation Board in the fifties. American, British, French, German, Dutch, Russian and Canadian companies and consultants participated in drawing up and revising the plans and, in part, in their implementation.

After the imposition of the comprehensive blockade the competent Iraqi authorities completed the projects by themselves. One of the ironies of the situation is that the principal proponent of draining the marshes of southern Iraq in the fifties was an American expert working for the Iraqi Board. It is also ironic that one of the rivers in the area is still called the Dutch River because a Dutch company carried out a project there.

I have been prompted to mention some of the accusations levelled at Iraq in order to shed light on the real situation and the fabrications and falsifications used as pretexts to prolong the iniquitous blockade against us. But it is even more important to refer to some glaring examples of the conduct of those who accuse us, to wit, the United States of America.

The United States the State that is so concerned with respect for Security Council resolutions, imposes two no-fly zones in the north and the south of Iraq without any authorization from the Security Council or any legitimate justification under international law. The United States Administration, which pretends to be so concerned over the rights of the Kurds in Iraq, was the very party that prevented the leaders of the Kurds from honouring an agreement that, after four months of dialogue, was freely entered into with the Government of Iraq in 1991. The United States Administration stated openly that that agreement would have strengthened the authority of the present national Government in Iraq, which was contrary to the United States objective of changing that Government.

Is this attitude in harmony with the Security Council resolutions that provide for respect of sovereignty and the achievement of international peace and security and stability in the region? Is it acceptable, under the resolutions of the Security Council, for that Administration to obstruct the operation of flights transporting pilgrims from a friendly Muslim State to Iraq's sacred religious shrines under the pretext that a number of politicians from that State were among the pilgrims? That very Administration also obstructed, under flimsy pretexts, the aerial shipment of meat from the Sudan to Iraq.

Lastly in this connection, I should like to affirm that Iraq expressed, in the words of its leader, President Saddam Hussein, its sincere desire to turn a new leaf with its neighbouring Arab countries in order to establish relations based on the Charter of the League of Arab States, the Charter of the United Nations and on the basis of mutual respect for one another's sovereignty and regard for each other's interests. However, it is well known to all that the United States Administration is the party that obstructs those efforts and brings pressure to bear on the States of the region to prevent dialogue with Iraq. The article by United States Secretary of State Warren Christopher published in *The New York Times* last April is, we believe, the most telling evidence in that respect.

Despite the harshness of the Security Council's resolutions concerning Iraq, we have implemented many of their provisions fully. We are legally and correctly continuing with the implementation of whatever provisions remain in the relevant resolutions. Within this process, we are also prepared to satisfy and allay the concerns of the members of the Security Council of which we have become aware in our contacts, although some of them have been introduced in legally irrelevant contexts.

In the meantime, however, we wonder: is it the duty of the State in question under the Charter to implement the provisions of the Security Council resolutions adopted under Chapter VII, without expecting any counter-obligations from the Council to implement the same provisions? The just, legal view is that resolutions of the Council adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter are binding upon the State in question and all other States, particularly the members of the Security Council, and even more particularly the Permanent Members of the Security Council. This, undoubtedly, is the rule of the Charter. It is therefore a foregone conclusion that the members of the Security Council, and especially its Permanent Members, should be keener than any other to abide by the resolutions they themselves adopt. However, the facts of the situation now are that one Permanent Member, namely the United States of America, is persistently obstructing any steps towards the correct legal application of the resolutions of the Council, particularly those provisions relating to the lifting of sanctions from Iraq, and is conducting itself on the basis of biased political motives that bear no relation to either the resolutions of the Council or the Charter.

The General Assembly is the general organ entrusted with deliberating on the world Organization as a whole under the Charter. Under the Charter, Member States have conferred on the Security Council the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and have agreed that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility, the Security Council acts on their behalf, in accordance with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations Charter. Consequently, under the Charter, the members of the Security Council,

both individually and collectively, bear the joint responsibility of the membership of the Organization. The collectivity of membership, as represented by the General Assembly, does not, on the basis of the delegation of power, lose the right to seek, through all available means, the correction of any failure that might arise in performing that responsibility.

Proceeding from this, we request that the members of the Security Council, the General Assembly and the international community as a whole look into the iniquitous and illegitimate situation in which one or two Permanent Members obstruct the correct legal application of the resolutions of the Security Council and consequently continue to impose upon the Iraqi people, a nation of ancient history, cruel suffering afflicting all aspects of human life.

It is within Iraq's right to demand strongly that this iniquitous and illegitimate situation be changed as soon as possible and to seek full clarification of the position of the Security Council on its just demands.

The President *(interpretation from Spanish)*: I now call on His Excellency Mr. Petros Solomon, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Eritrea.

Mr. Solomon (Eritrea): At the outset I wish to seize this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Amara Essy on his election as the President of the General Assembly at its forty-ninth session. I am confident that he will guide our deliberations with wisdom and skill.

Permit me also to rejoice with the people of South Africa, who have at long last eradicated apartheid and created a plural society in which all citizens of South Africa shall live in harmony, freedom and equality, irrespective of their ethnic, religious or class backgrounds. Their victory is a victory of good over evil and a tribute to the concept of unity in diversity, as well as a unique example of the concerted, unremitting and successful struggle of humanity against a pernicious assault on human dignity and nobility.

We are also happy to note that in the Middle East age-old adversaries have come close enough to resolve some of the most intractable problems of our time by negotiations based on understanding and the accommodation of the interests of all parties. We welcome the agreements reached between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), as well as subsequent agreements reached between Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. We hope that this initial move, whose momentum must be maintained, will augur well for a comprehensive, permanent and enduring peace in the region as a whole.

We have now entered a new era of renewed hope. As the United Nations approaches its golden jubilee, it has become increasingly evident that the majority of the nations and peoples of the world believe that the world Organization is essential and are reposing renewed hope and confidence in it. In the aftermath of the cold war, we are witnessing a transition towards a new pattern of international relations. With the uncertainty of the historical process that is establishing a new world order, the United Nations has once again become the eminently relevant, perhaps even the indispensable, Organization that its founding fathers wished it to be.

The emerging new international system and the universality of the membership of the United Nations, as well as the abundant good will it has garnered, offer it the unique opportunity not only to establish new guidelines to address international challenges but to ensure that the coming new world will be permeated with the values of collective security, peace, democracy, social justice and cooperation for mutual benefit. This is also a favourable time for the United Nations to raise global awareness, fashion a common world outlook, probe new frontiers and create new standards, particularly in the realms of sustainable and equitable global development; conflict prevention, management and resolution; human and democratic rights; and social justice.

Those great tasks, my delegation is convinced, will inevitably require commensurate changes in the structure and functional modalities of the United Nations system itself, if it is to cope with the challenges of the new international order. The institutions and agencies that reflected the exigencies of the last half-century must be modified or yield to new ones that mirror not only the optimism and needs of the present but also the hopes and aspirations of the future. The international system must turn — obviously, at a gradual and measured pace — towards a fairer and more equitable representation of its constituencies in all the organs of the system, and especially in the Security Council. This may indeed be the most opportune time to review structural issues with new vision and boldness, the ultimate purpose being to instil and build into the system a dynamism that will enable it to respond and adjust promptly to changing global realities.

Furthermore, we feel that the United Nations must place significant emphasis on the creation of a reliable early warning system that would enable it to avert disasters and conflicts. An active, rather than a reactive, role on the part of the United Nations can go a long way towards reducing, if not preventing, human suffering and towards mitigating disasters and conflicts at reduced cost to the international community.

Secondly, all available evidence on the structure of the United Nations emphasizes the need to restructure it on the basis of equilibrium between the forces of centralization and decentralization. Certain problems, such as the environment, population and disarmament, may necessitate coordinated international action and centralized authority. Others, including the breakdown of political systems and regional inter-State conflicts may be better and more correctly understood and solved by regional actors, institutions and approaches. There is thus an imperative to set in motion a dynamic arrangement balancing centralization and decentralization to create the desired juridical basis for a new world order underpinned by a political culture of peace, justice, economic well-being and a healthy environment. Playing such a catalytic role should be the major preoccupation of the United Nations. Only such an environment can make the Organization an effective actor that protects and promotes peace, development and human rights.

The situation in the Horn of Africa is far from satisfactory, although it may be improving day by day. I must perhaps emphasize here that the impoverishment that stalks the region as a whole is largely man-made and cannot be attributed to the vicissitudes of nature, as is often done. Decades of war and civil strife have sapped the energy, productive capacity and problem-solving mechanisms of the populations, leaving them easily susceptible to even minor imbalances in rainfall patterns and natural calamities.

Hence, international emergency assistance and, even more, development assistance will remain vital for years to come in overcoming the consequences of decades of war and turmoil. We in the Government of Eritrea, along with our regional partners, realize that reliable and sustainable economic development will lie in effective regional cooperation hinging on durable peace and stability. It is in this spirit that we and our partners are prepared to pool our resources to secure regional peace through mechanisms of close consultation and coordination for conflict prevention and resolution, and by broadening areas of economic interaction and cooperation.

It is against this backdrop, and within the framework of a regional approach, that we have attempted to address the quest for collective security in our region. In Somalia the countries of the region, under the chairmanship of President Melles Zenawi of Ethiopia, have done much to restore normalcy to the country by bringing the warring factions to the negotiating table. This regional effort has complemented and acted as a vital linkage to international intervention at a number of crucial junctures.

In this connection, we believe that this is an auspicious moment for the United Nations to decide to focus in the period ahead only on the provision of assistance for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the devastated country of Somalia. The opinion advanced by some in the last few days that the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) is vital for and will enhance political reconciliation is, we are convinced, seriously flawed. Indeed, all evidence from the country indicates that such action is likely to complicate or delay the process. On the other hand, the Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development (IGADD) should take upon itself, and be encouraged to continue, the political reconciliation it has facilitated in the past.

In the Sudan, the countries of the region have applied the same regional approach and have proposed different frameworks of conflict resolution to facilitate a comprehensive political settlement that takes into account the best interests and welfare of both sides. Here, too, the international community should encourage and support the regional efforts undertaken under the auspices of IGADD.

Some of the major problems that have existed for many years are still with us and, indeed, there are now new ones. Thus, the crisis in the former Yugoslavia does not appear to be any nearer to solution. The events in Rwanda are a tragic reminder of human folly and have etched an indelible mark on the collective conscience of humanity. These events no doubt reinforce the necessity for preventive measures and perhaps the need to make a fresh assessment of the conventional limitations of the United Nations in peace-keeping.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.